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THE EDUCATIONAL Forum

Cocreation of Knowledge: Roles of Coresearchers in Research Teams

by Ronel Erwee and Joan Conway

Abstract

This paper provides insight into how school-based research teams and external researchers conceptualize and act in their roles as coresearchers. The observations and experiences of school-based and external research team members and lead researchers provided the data for this paper. All were Queensland-based educators involved in researching the effect of a three-year school revitalization process on improved school practice.

The concept of research teams from diverse backgrounds working together on complex long-term projects has been explored in the literature on internal and external researchers in organizational development and management consulting (Golembiewski 2000), industry-university research partnerships (Adler, Shani, and Styhre 2003), and collaborative research and learning between university and school participants in educational settings (Mebane and Galassi 2003).

In an earlier study of the role researchers have in successful school innovation (Austin and Crowther 2000), significant conclusions were formulated regarding researchers' roles and the research process. Austin and Crowther (2000, 41) stated that the dynamics of the research experience included "building external-internal cohesion, mega-strategizing, feasibility and support, localizing, improving learning outcomes, adding value, enhancing professional communities, efficacy, and transparency." This paper adds to the body of knowledge by describing how coresearching was implemented within the Innovative Designs for Enhancing Achievement in Schools (IDEAS) process.

This paper represents qualitative research (Cavana, Delahaye, and Sekaran 2001). Therefore, it does not follow the convention of a quantitative research report and does not include quantitative research methodology, statistical analysis of data, and discussion of results. The qualitative data used are the actual statements made by the

participants, collected via teleconferences and interviews. The conceptual framework of this coresearch journey evolved from the interpretations of the authors and lead researchers.

The first section of this paper describes the IDEAS framework and the research design approach of the project, followed by the specific journeys of participating coresearchers.

The beginning of a research journey starts with an educator's decision to engage in a process that adds a new role—that of researcher—to his or her already multifaceted life.

The IDEAS Research Process

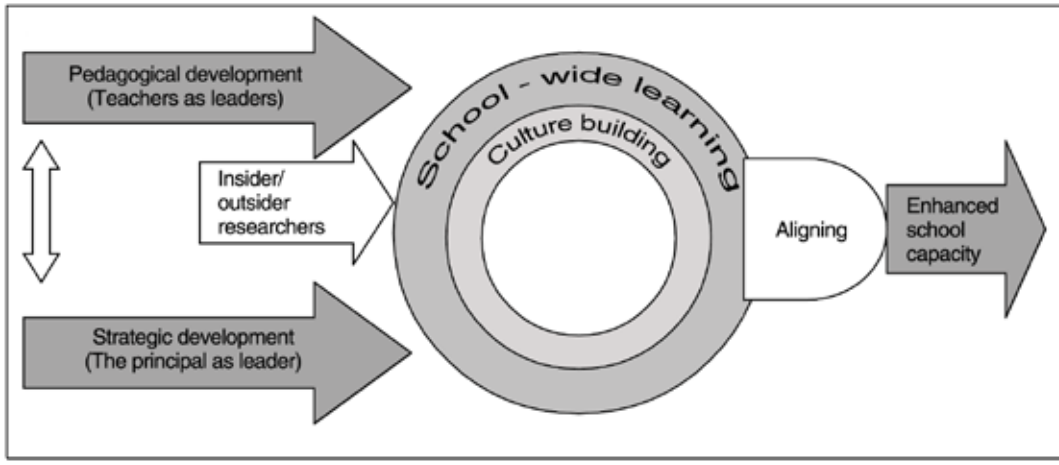
During 2001–2003, Education Queensland (EQ) trialed IDEAS in several schools as part of the Queensland State Education–2010 (Education Queensland 2001) initiative. IDEAS—a school revitalization process—was developed within the Leadership Research Institute at the University of Southern Queensland (USQ) to enhance student achievement. IDEAS began in 1997 as a result of dialogue between EQ's School-based Management Unit and the USQ's Leadership Research Institute (Crowther, Andrews et al. 2002). It is a conceptual model for school revitalization developed in full cognizance of significant global research findings about successful organizational reform in Australia (Cuttance 1998; Hill and Crevola 1999; Crowther, Hann, and McMaster 2000) and America (Newmann and Wehlage 1995; Stringfield and Herman 1996).

IDEAS focuses on five contributory elements in a research-based framework (RBF). In its developmental work, the IDEAS research team considered the experiences of IDEAS schools in working with evolving versions of the RFB. The RBF elements, if developed and aligned with one another, have a positive impact on school outcomes, particularly student achievement in key learning areas (see Figure 1). The five contributory elements (Crowther, Andrews et al. 2002, 4–5) are:

- Strategic Foundations—the overarching values of the school and associated strategies for making those values explicit in the school and the wider community;
- Cohesive Community—the exercise of collaborative activity in the school's professional learning community and in the wider community while respecting the value of individualism;
- 3-Dimensional Pedagogy—the integration of school-wide pedagogy, authoritative pedagogy, and personal pedagogy in school practices;
- Infrastructural Design—the use of real or concrete school characteristics, particularly time, space, technology, and curriculum frameworks; and
- Professional Supports—internal and external learning opportunities that focus on pedagogy and encourage the creation of new knowledge.

Figure 1 is based on an earlier research project, the Innovation and Best Practice Project ([IBPP] Crowther, Hann, and McMaster 2000), but has been adapted to reflect the insight that the lead investigators gained during this research project.

Figure 1: Framework for Enhancing School Outcomes through Holistic School Reform



Adapted from Crowther, Hann, and McMaster 2000

The IDEAS Research Approach

The purpose of this research project was to trace the implementation of an authoritative process of school improvement—the IBPP framework for enhancing school outcomes—over a three-year period and to identify links between the IDEAS process and ensuing outcomes. The research used two methodological approaches. The first approach focused on qualitative methodology and was grounded in practical experiences. It captured data that illuminated critical elements, junctures, and events in organizational development processes. School-based research team members, or insiders, acted as participant observers and were critical to this approach. External research team members, or the outsiders—USQ, EQ, and the IDEAS support team—acted as critical friends (Crowther and Andrews 2001).

The second research approach involved outcomes-focused measurements related to student learning in identified areas, as well as quantitative benchmarking and outcome measurements. These measures were gathered by members of the school-based research teams. All research team members—both school-based and external—were expected to use in-depth interviewing, reflection on practice, and projective techniques to acquire stakeholders' perspectives. The external research team members specifically used the unfolding matrix process (Crowther and Andrews 2001) with the school-based research teams to explore their explanations and insights for measured levels of defined outcomes.

The Research Plan

Seven volunteer schools from the original pool that committed to using the IDEAS process across a three-year period expressed an interest in the IBPP framework research.

They agreed to work jointly with the university team to explore the validity of the IDEAS framework. They also agreed to establish a school-based research team to administer the research and to identify a school facilitator to coordinate the project and engage an internal researcher. The phases described here are elements of the IDEAS process and are part of the subproject on "Cocreation of Knowledge: Roles of Coresearchers in Research Teams."

Orientation session. A two-day orientation session for the coresearchers was held in August 2003. Two to four school-based research team members from each of seven schools and a team of nine external researchers from USQ and EQ attended the session. A teleconference between each school and USQ was held before the orientation session to obtain a specific school focus question as the basis for data gathering.

The orientation session was designed to help team members understand the coresearchers' role in the project and provide them with the opportunity to interact with other coresearchers. The session was structured so that external researchers also could fully understand their role and discuss appropriate research tools and methods, research protocol, and ethical behavior. During this session, the research focus of this article was conceived.

Following the orientation session, external researchers from EQ and USQ were asked the following questions:

- How do you conceptualize your role as an external researcher?
- How has the orientation session helped you to clarify your role?
- What behaviors or values did you observe during the session that helped you to think about your role?
- What personal learning took place?
- What team dynamics do you anticipate in the coresearch teams?

Phase 1. External researchers, grouped in a variety of ways, spent portions of two days at each school talking with school-based research team members and other teachers to collect data related to pedagogical practices. The criteria for data collection included evidence of:

- the school's concept of pedagogy;
- school-based professional learning processes;
- the IBPP framework; and
- the IDEAS process framework.

The school facilitator and school-based research team members participated in a workshop at each site to clarify outcomes related to each school and to explore the following questions:

- What documented evidence of school outcomes related to the school's learning priority is available?
- What factors are perceived to have contributed to these outcomes?
- What key actions were undertaken, and by whom?
- What is the value of the IBPP and the IDEAS process frameworks in explaining these outcomes?

Phase 2. A lead researcher, accompanied by different teams of two other external researchers, visited the schools. The authors also were permitted to go on these visits on several occasions.

In November 2003, a one-day workshop centered around the theme "Reflective Moments" was held. Participants, all of whom had attended the orientation session, discussed their experiences in light of each school's conceptualizations, outcomes, and contextual influences.

Participants reflected on their metaphorical journeys since the orientation meeting and on the coresearching process to date. Their comments indicated that the emerging research database was outstanding and that conceptual breakthroughs on the longstanding EQ-ESQ research initiative were being made.

Phase 3. Four teams comprised of two to four participants consented to 30-minute interviews via teleconferences with the authors. The principal and the IDEAS process facilitators in these schools also participated in the teleconferences. The schools represented both the primary and secondary sectors and were all located in urban areas, with enrollments between 200 and 1,000 students. Other evidenced-based data was added from interviews conducted by the USQ-based external research team members months after the research project ended.

The actual statements made by the participants were used to assess their perceptions about their role as coresearchers and the learning and research journey. The conceptual framework of the coresearch journey evolved from the interpretations of the lead researchers and the authors.

Starting the Research Journey

The beginning of a research journey starts with an educator's decision to engage in a process that adds a new role—that of researcher—to his or her already multifaceted life. Educators who become researchers have stated that they embark on a study because they conceptualize their contribution to the process, envision meaningful interaction with other researchers, and anticipate a learning opportunity.

The educators who became IDEAS research team members found themselves engaged in a long-term research project that evolved over time, was conceptually stimulating, and resonated with a value system. The research process absorbed a portion of their life's spectrum. As a result, one question that emerged was how their participation in this research project enriched and affected their other life experiences and their roles as educators.

The IDEAS process initially appeared to relate only to their working lives as educators. However, because the IDEAS process involved improved school practice, one could argue that the project affected more than their daily educational praxis. From observations and interviews, it became apparent that members of school-based research teams inspired their colleagues about the vision and school-wide pedagogy (Crowther, Andrews et al. 2002), stimulated parallel leadership among staff members and students (Crowther, Kaagan et al. 2002), and aligned the schools' capabilities with community needs. Participants expanded their interaction with school staff members, the community, project teams, other IDEAS

schools, educators in the state, and the national and international educational community. The IDEAS process was not limited to one facet of the participants' lives, educational praxis, or roles, but contributed to complex and multifaceted life experiences (Andrews and Lewis 2002).

Because all research team members were teachers and enmeshed in their profession, the IDEAS process affirmed their self-image as experienced educators and skillful practitioners. The recognition received in their schools and community strengthened researchers' self-perception.

Multidimensional Roles

Regardless of their ascribed roles, the lead researchers, the school-based team members, and the external researchers were challenged by their roles and the pressures they faced. For example, the lead researchers conceptualized the project, modeled acceptable behaviors, and articulated fundamental values. They stressed that no hierarchical divisions in the research process prompted other team members to coin the term "coresearchers." One participant described the lead researchers' role.

> *Dorothy and Frank, the lead researchers, embrace an inclusive model of working and looking for new ideas and, at the same time, have such rigor in their vision. . . . I personally grew a great deal . . . it happened only because of the collegial atmosphere and support that was given. It is just their way of working—a fantastic model of learning and growing together. . . . None of us were at the same point in time, but it was a growth opportunity for a team of different people at different levels.*

The lead researchers were adamant that they wanted to hear about the outcomes experienced during the IDEAS process. They did not presume to know the answers, constructed a process that enabled an exploration of meaning, and reserved judgment. They knew that the research team members had different expectations and perspectives; therefore, their lenses about school processes would differ. Participants were encouraged to ask questions, which enhanced the understanding of the IDEAS process and provided a broader perspective. The lead researchers directed the school-based research teams and external researchers how to attend to the focal research questions, to guide the data gathering, and to present evidence and question the case study narrative.

The lead researchers recommended that a group facilitator be selected to maintain continuity and carry the workload of the project. Thus, the concept of a school management team emerged. School-based research team members recorded the organizational history of the IDEAS process and were involved in unlocking information. They devised their own ways of facilitating, collecting evidence, and sharing external research. The lead researchers believed that because school-based research team members lived through unique experiences in the IDEAS process, they had an internal understanding that the external researchers did not share.

The school-based team members who were not principals noted that they felt special. Though the task was daunting, they enjoyed being given the opportunity to make a valuable

contribution. These participants appreciated the collaborative process and the guidance they received from lead researchers about building a case study and preparing for a focus forum.

The external researchers developed a process that provided evidence of IDEAS in the schools. They validated and explored the evidence, developed concepts from the case studies, and provided feedback. The lead researchers felt that the external researchers' knowledge of the process was essential in obtaining relevant information. One external researcher described his role.

> *I'm an external researcher and I'm not here to judge what's right, wrong, better, or worse, but to be able to say 'yes, great, show me substantial evidence to be able to support that.' So in that way, as a researcher, I'm adding to the case study, the whole story.*

Some participants served both as school-based research team members and as external researchers with the IDEAS Support Team (IST) and the university-based team. For example, the USQ research team supported schools and explored the IDEAS model and processes. Those who were school-based research team members and external researchers had three components to their research frames. First, as an IDEAS facilitator in their school, they had a great deal of commitment and ownership, prompting them to have personal perspectives about their role on the school-based research team and on their relationships with other people in the school. Second, they realized that often during rigorous conversation, they were not present, but outside the school community gathering data. Therefore, their own personal perspectives may not be represented adequately in their school's case study. Finally, as external researchers, they interrogated other school-based research teams.

Participants not only struggled with their complex roles, but with switching roles at different times. External researchers, when interrogating school-based research teams, were confronted with either sitting silently, becoming subsumed into a school's research frame, or challenging the school-based research team's expertise while recognizing them as coresearchers.

A member of the external research team noted that understanding the research frame and being aware of the potential conflicts in their multiple roles was clarified during the process, and their concomitant anxiety was lowered.

> *There was, in that initial phase, a great deal of confusion as we tried to understand the research frame and our role as either internal or external researchers. When I saw the questions and the pulling and pushing of ideas that others were having, I felt that I was in a very comfortable group. I could see that the dilemmas they faced were also dilemmas for me. As members of a school community, they were able to put a lens over their work and not allow their opinion to be biased.*

Conceptual Focus

Diagnostic inventory, as a quantitative pre-test and post-test, was used to provide perceptions of the school community at given points in time. By asking questions related directly to various elements of the RBF, the diagnostic inventory was used to gather contextual-

ized data from staff members, students, and parents, thus providing a snapshot of what was working well in the school and any areas of concern. The diagnostic inventory was designed by the lead researchers for use in the IDEAS process.

The conceptual demands on research team members were extensive. All participants had to share the lead researchers' vision for the IDEAS schools—a focus on student achievement and well-being. Research team members had to identify and gather evidence of the development of pedagogical practices appropriate to a school's vision and to establish to what extent a school had developed the strategic capability to transpose its vision into school-wide conceptualizations of pedagogy.

During the orientation workshop, the lead researchers helped research team members to embrace the conceptual case study framework, clarified research team member roles, and guided school-based research teams in developing data gathering programs.

Core Values

Research team members were required to treat one another as equals, value others' contributions, create an atmosphere of trust, and engage in mutualistic work. Decisions and guidelines for the research process resulted from roundtable discussions. Research team members developed collective insight over time, and created and documented the meanings that were constructed. Intellectual integrity was valued.

Research team members fostered a no-blame culture and celebrated and praised achievements. To avoid compromising the evidence, research team members did not give opinions, advice, or direction while gathering data. One participant stated that because the IDEAS process focused on building school capacity, the analysis of school-based research teams and school communities' capabilities should be enhanced.

> *We should leave something of value, in terms of capacity building to the school—not write a report—but actually engage with them in some thinking or a learning process that will then enable them to do things when we're gone. We should help them interrogate practice and provide them with a way of thinking about how they learn about the organization and their own departments.*

Core values were demonstrated by the lead researchers throughout the research process. The lead researchers were viewed as analytical, conceptual thinkers who cared deeply about building capacity in schools and engaged in reflective thinking. The school-based research team members cited evidence of the lead researchers' mutual respect and the way in which they built on participants' strengths.

Learning Together

From the beginning, research team members became part of a learning community that trusted and helped one another to expand their insight into their learning journey. One aim of the IDEAS process was to build capacity within the school community. Before the orientation, research team members admitted feeling confused about their roles and the research frame. During the workshop, the research frame, interactive sessions, and role modeling

behaviors were clarified. Processes were developed for decision-making based on shared understanding, collective insights, and equality of opinion during roundtable discussions. As these individuals became coresearchers, they accepted and learned their roles. They also ceased to see external researchers as people who want only to see successes in schools.

When the school-based research teams were asked how they initially conceptualized their roles, members stated that they did not understand their roles and had their own interpretations. They conceived their roles as evidence collectors, facilitators, advocates of the IDEAS process, and authors of the narrative. Over time, their perspective broadened. Several school-based research team members saw their roles as processing information below the surface, digging more deeply, and discovering more information than anticipated, with opportunities for action research and responsibility for creative writing.

One team member who acted as a school-based researcher and external team member initially felt "inadequate as a practitioner coming into an academic role," but grew to feel comfortable in the dual role and focused on its potential for enhanced learning. Other participants stated that they deliberately shifted between roles during visits to other schools, stepped back to analyze evidence objectively, and benefited as they transferred knowledge between schools.

Mutual Trust

Mutual learning and establishing trust between school-based research teams and external researchers was critical. Over the time period during which the research was conducted, school-based research team members and external researchers became familiar with one another, displayed sufficient trust, and did not erect barriers. School-based research team members were challenged by the ideas presented by external researchers. As a result, they learned to question one another's thinking, accept positive disagreement, and not take it personally. One lead researcher explained:

> *Trust us, there is a process here. We learn together. We are not the experts, we are creating things, we are happy to work with you and share what we know, but you add value to us.*

An external researcher explained mutual trust in this way:

> *There is a high degree of trust, which is given over to all the individuals who said they want to be a part of this. I find the trust factor is quite a driving factor.*

The dynamics between school-based research team members and external researchers were considered positive. External researchers eventually were seen as critical friends who were analytical and asked challenging and unexpected questions. A feeling of trust existed among external research teams, school-based researchers, and school communities. All believed that they could state their issues and concerns and know that sensitive information would not be shared. School-based research team members said that lead researchers influenced them as they dug deeper, challenged the process, asked questions, and provided a clinical objective view. Lead researchers also were viewed as mentors and external critical friends—not as part of a hierarchy.

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Members of school-based research teams learned to use collegial learning and a peer-based leadership process to avail themselves of authoritative, external advice and support. Participants stated that school-based research teams became more purposeful, refocused when necessary to evaluate achievements, and explored the interrelationships or alignment between components of the IDEAS process.

Enriching Language

The researchers shared a common language that was influenced by their educational experience, training, strategies, and the professional policies and practices of EQ. Within the IDEAS process, terms such as strategic foundations, cohesive community, three-dimensional pedagogy, infrastructural design, and professional supports expanded their common language (Crowther, Andrews et al. 2002). During the research process, school-based research team members and external researchers incorporated these concepts, developed a shared system of values, and formed a language that permeated shared experiences. Researchers indicated that this common language made shared meaning and intent quite empowering. Researchers recognized that each participant had diverse ways of expressing their perceptions and framing their analysis.

Confronting Paradox

Researchers' dual roles impacted their focus during different phases of the research project. One researcher said:

> *Each episode of IDEAS—either during delivery or while preparing for the next— has allowed that notion of wearing two hats . . . to be a support advocate and serve in a guidance role, and also to be in an advocacy and developmental role with USQ. I had to leave behind my education frame, my school connection, and my system responsibility, and stand squarely in the research team group and be prepared only to listen, even when there were provocative comments or an issue or challenge for which I have seen other successful events occur. . . . I was not allowed to stand again in that place. . . . I couldn't suddenly search underneath my chair for the other hat and put it on.*

Researchers curbed their inclinations to provide examples of how another school dealt with an issue, offer advice, or use a framework that could reposition thinking. School-based research team members and external researchers were aware of situations in which they were tempted to note options that schools could consider, but in which lead researchers brought them back into an active listening and reflective mode.

Some schools expected the external researchers to provide an objective view, validate the school-based research teams' findings, or write the narrative. Other schools had serious and critical considerations before moving forward, and looked for expert advice and help. Though external researchers suggested some actions, they encouraged schools to generate solutions.

Pressures and Growth Opportunities

According to several school-based research team members, they experienced time pressures, felt compelled to finalize the record of their journey, and wanted a sense of closure.

Other participants yearned for more time to reflect on the process, for introspection, or for an opportunity to consult external critical friends after receiving feedback from external researchers. They were daunted to realize that they were not only part of a statewide project—but also a new direction—and that a wider audience existed for their narrative.

At times, participants experienced cognitive dissonance and tension when determining how to face realities and proceed with the research or strategic decisions. For example, they were uncertain about when and where debriefing sessions should occur. External researchers were concerned that each group would not be included in the debriefing session at the end of the research and felt an obligation to expose the schools to rich conversations and a new level of synthesis, and to give them an opportunity to resolve issues or obtain direction.

Commitment Level

School-based research team members reflected on the commitment of school staff members and students. Through their participation in the project, they built networks with peers, students, and community members. They stated that their belief in the IDEAS process made their commitment strong. The school-based research team members related stories about resisters, but admitted that overall the community's commitment enabled the process to move forward.

Conclusions

Participating researchers reflected on the cocreation of knowledge and their relationships with coresearchers. They learned to appreciate the different lenses that other researchers had and the levels of conceptual synthesis that were possible. School-based research team members realized that roles can become blurred and that the bias in their own lenses about the gathered evidence could skew a case study. They appreciated the complexity of acting as coresearchers in a long-term research process.

In a professional learning community, each person's value is acknowledged, regardless of their experience or expertise. Everyone contributes to the learning community. The interviews with participants shed light on the extent they were engaged in shared meaning-making. They acknowledged that their conceptual thinking developed during the process and that their mind-sets and conceptual maps changed. They became willing to learn from one another and found the mutual learning process empowering.

School-based research team members were eager to ensure that their views were captured by the external researchers. They focused on personal learning processes and insights, positive team dynamics, and the way in which they captured change processes in schools.

Capacity Building within the Research Team

Figure 1 refers to outcomes that enhance school capacity. But, what is capacity building, and which dynamics emerge when capacity is built within a research team? To what extent is capacity building sustainable over a longer period of time? The authors and lead researchers concurred that the process of capacity building cannot be separated from the professional development of researchers and their interrelationships.

An inclusive approach used in the research conducted in IDEAS-committed schools contributed to the longevity of the process. The participants gradually understood the coresearching team approach. Members of school-based research teams indicated that their capacity to become more competent coresearchers was developed by the lead researchers' questions, their focus on the rigor of the research process, and their emotional support throughout the process. School-based research team members recognized that increased skill and understanding enabled them to assume an equal role in the research process and enhance their capacity to develop school case studies collaboratively.

All participants felt that they learned from one another and contributed to continuous cultural change in schools. School-based research team members noted that their insight into the research framework and personal learning opportunities helped them to contribute to the implementation of IDEAS in their school and the community.

Preparing for the Future

The participants realized that their knowledge should be shared within a wider professional community of educators and that their insights as coresearchers could become the scaffolding on which other educators might build. They realized that they not only helped align values within the participating schools, but also could contribute to a change in education by sharing their learning with a wider audience. They realized the importance of maintaining their enthusiasm, not becoming complacent, and getting all staff members involved in the process.

These coresearchers recognized that they now possessed "new levels of professional capability that will enhance the teaching profession" and they must continue to hone "sophisticated research skill development and mutualistic relationships with external researchers" (Austin and Crowther 2000, 47). This enhanced view of capacity building bodes well for a lifelong understanding of sustainability in schools in the knowledge society (Drucker 1994; Beare 2001).

Capacity Building in the IDEAS Process

The research was constructed within the context of the IDEAS framework and the ways in which schools implemented the concepts. The lead researchers' philosophy was that researchers must leave a legacy of capacity building within the school-based research teams and the school system (Figure 1). Building skills among all concerned, improving partnerships in school communities, and enabling schools to make improvements in key areas were all goals of the process. One external researcher shared:

> *We built an incredible trust with schools and were there to answer their questions. If you have built that capacity, then you have a golden research opportunity to create illuminating levels of understanding about levels of engagement. We always talk about a research consultancy, because we have created concepts through our engagement. . . . We have created frameworks with which schools can work. This particular intensive piece of research uses capacity and reflects on that.*

School-based research team members recorded what transpired during the IDEAS process and then compiled, organized, and presented the information. These participants col-

lected evidence, integrated external research into the school, and cooperated with external researchers to interrogate the process. School-based research team members learned to validate data and triangulate that information. They learned to deal not only with changing demands during the project, but also to adapt to the changing circumstances at the school and in the community.

The participating schools realized that the IDEAS process provided a unique opportunity to form a school-based research team and obtain input from external researchers. School-based research team members helped colleagues view the IDEAS process as a capacity-building method in which all parties can engage. All participants learned from the process by confronting data and contributed to formulating a vision for the future. Principals appreciated the opportunity to share their perspectives and realized the crucial role staff members have in the process.

In many instances, the participating schools demonstrated their use of the concepts from the IDEAS framework to develop and engage others. Parents, students, and local bureaucrats were involved in reflecting, analyzing, and planning for the future. A participant described how one school-based research team applied what its members learned with a local council.

> *The people we talked with were part of the progression. They were the people in the community who might have children at the school. However, at the same time, their main interest was as an elder in the community . . . what they saw before was that the school was just that building over there, into which teachers went from the island, and who just did their school thing. They now realize that they are a part of that school . . . and that the school is part of their community. We received feedback from the students about that . . . there is a rejuvenated appreciation for the culture. There is definitely evidence of teamwork.*

Participants cited other beneficial outcomes from the IDEAS process. They realized that the IDEAS process will continue and new staff members and students who join a school will become immersed in that process. They believed that school-based research team members will continue the legacy of a thinking and learning process that enables the school community to continue to achieve success. These educators now have the capacity to interrogate practice and think differently about the school, about their own departments, and about the community.

External researchers gained deeper insight into the dynamics of cocreation of knowledge. They realized that their conceptual understanding of capacity building and sustainability in schools is evolving.

Future Research Issues

Further investigation of the complexity of the coresearch process is needed. Will coresearchers confirm that they live multifaceted lives and play multidimensional roles in similar projects? What core values are formulated at the beginning of the research and how does the coresearch role unfold during the process? Researchers could debate how and to what extent they establish mutual trust or commitment in a research team and how a com-

mon language evolves. They could describe how team members deal with blurred boundaries between roles or with other pressures during the research process. Outside Australia, researchers in other countries could test the IDEAS process by replicating this study and could contribute to the investigation of the IDEAS process as an evolving conceptual framework.

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